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(2) A TREATISE 5
ON THE
PHILOSOPHY OF ART.

BY
(1)
D. R. MOORE.

In nature, all is useful, all is beautiful. It is therefore beautiful because it is alive, moving, reproductive; it is therefore useful because it is symmetrical and fair. Beauty will not come at the call of a legislature, nor will it repeat in England or America its history in Greece. It will come, as always, unannounced, and spring up between the feet of brave and earnest men.—

EMERSON.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE writer is constrained to offer the public no apology for introducing this subject and its treatment in the following pages. This little work is the unpretentious result of what was originally undertaken solely as a literary recreation, to while away the monotony of isolated environments, and the tedium of an occasional hour snatched from the arduous round of professional life. The subject is one which, hitherto, especially in Canadian literature, has not been overdone; and with the exercise of some industry and patience I have endeavored as fully as possible to have its treatment conform to standards of authority and truth.

Probably the most interesting feature in this enquiry is the paradoxical nature of the transition from the original conditions and purposes of art, to their later and present uses. "Art," says Emerson, "is the path of the Creator to his work;" assuredly it has traversed the entire distance between original necessity and modern luxury. Urgent need was the parent of art, as necessity was man's first tutor; its electric rod ever attracts the delicate needle of genius, and to this day he remains a slave to its inexorable laws. Like a burning Nessus-shirt, necessity envelops him within its prurient folds, now kindling the flame of hunger—now inflicting the leprosy of death. Necessity dug out the first canoe, excavated the first cave, erected the first hut, carved the first deity, and in ceaseless action shall so continue. Energetic action was the first duty required of primitive man, and success with the highest types of manhood is possible only upon the same terms. The rude dug-out canoe of the savage was an acknowledgement of the supreme law of necessity, and became the initial design for all future maritime crafts. It must, however, pass through successive oar, sail, steam, and electric stages before it can emerge the perfect type of an English or Italian ironclad.

In the relaxation of necessity's original grasp upon man, we witness the decay and disappearance, to any real effect, of certain arts. The choicest production of sculpture, becomes now, only a piece for the gallery; gaudy paintings have become mere chattels of commerce, and the ambition of the opulent present revels only in the sensuous designs of the early Greek, Roman and Gothic masters.

D. R. MOORE.

Stanley, N. B., 1897.

THE HISTORY OF

THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART.

The operation of the human mind is a record of perpetual ascension. Imagination never tires in its search for new conquests, which, when attained, with the caprice of a child no longer appeased with a half-worn toy, are wantonly thrown aside in the pursuit of others. Intellectual power lies dormant and obscure at the sea-level of primitive man; and, like mountain upheavals, its greatest altitudes have been attained only through the operation of heterogenous forces and energy. The interval between the dawn of intelligence in the primitive savage, and the imaginative power of Milton or Shakespeare is measured by successive violent convulsions in the great family of mankind—indeed, the whole field of human culture. Doubtlessly man's energies were, originally, solely of a physical character, how and when the intellectual faculty first became quickened and alive must ever remain a mystery. When the struggle for life first became associated with the struggle for the life of others; when the struggle for life begot selfishness, aggressiveness and war, and the struggle for the life of others begot unselfishness, sympathy and peace, we shall never know. The struggle for life developed courage and strength, characteristics of individualism, and the struggle for the life of others developed sympathy and love, the characteristics of altruism. The law of preservation asserted itself in the capacity to provide for himself; and with

the instinct of reproduction came the hope of posterity; this determined the morphology of all living things, and constitutes the ethics of organic life. When the first savage mother became roused to her first tender and sympathetic concern for her babe, and for a moment in its helplessness and suffering forgot herself and became conscious of the unutterable impulses of motherhood; when some rising feeling first lessened the cruelty of some brutal act, and a kindly gesture first softened some fierce glare, and a sympathetic gleam first kindled in an almost animal eye, however long heredity might require to nurse into vigorous life these precious germs of intellectual might, these changes certainly marked the most stupendous transition in the history of man.

At the confluence of the two main currents of man's constitution—the animal and the rational—he forever surrenders instinct; henceforth reason assumes the control of the fiery steeds of human passion. Coincident with the progress of the development of reason is the diminution or disappearance of certain vital traits or instincts. That fundamental canon of nature, self-preservation, has become relaxed and weakened, and as though reason had made a compromise with the body, free will itself may, with the artfulness of a friend destroy the beautiful temple of its abode. The instinct of

self-preservation universally prevails in the lower order of creation, and equally distinguishes man as he first appears in the world; but physical man has long been resigned to the operation of unnatural indulgences, and is now the victim of destructive needs unforeshadowed in his constitution. Luxury and disregard of natural law expose him to a continual siege of malady and disorder, and the far reaching resources of science and sanitation are powerless to confer upon him the vigor of life and longevity that marked his former existence. The Achilles spots of vulnerability multiply in the ratio of his civilization, and the priceless web of three score and ten years shall ever be spun from his own vitals.

The laws and restrictions of civilization have also destroyed the Elysian fields of human felicity. A truer nobility of conduct is found in the example of Spartan obedience to the unwritten laws of their country than that which distinguishes the law-circumvented citizen of today. Legislation has become the arbitrary gauge of social virtue and order; and the statute books of civilized nations are but the Hebrew decalogue extensively sub-sectioned to the requirements of civil exigency; English law alone punishing vice, the Chinese also rewarding virtue.

Society is menaced by a thousand dangers which were unknown to primitive communities of men. The socialistic and anarchistic outbreaks of our time are but lunatic and la grippe distempers of civilization, in which social disorders, as in the bodily ailment, the weakest organization must succumb. Man has become the creature of civil law, the continual operation of which tends to the discouragement

of voluntary deeds of heroism and justice, and to the shaping of individual impulses to arbitrary standards of methods and expedients. Such then is the mystery of Life. Like the strange voice of the Theban Sphinx, time puts to the fleeting generations of man the terrible riddle of human destiny, only to devour successive multitudes as they appear. The cypher naught and eternity are both expressed by a circle, still they are alike worthless in solving the problem of life. In the morning dews of nature we behold in the mute babe a spark of life imprisoned into time; in manhood we behold it kindle into operation the wonderful activities of his being; and in age's lone retreat, where the hoary pilgrim may look down upon the kingdoms of the past and their glories, we perceive it dim the grandeur of his vision, muffle the melody of his song, and extinguish the watch-fires of his reason—still does the mystery of Life elude our grasp and mock our pursuit! Within the vessel sheds the lamp its faithful light; the shattering of the pitcher extinguishes the flame!

The path of art winds down through the perspective of man's history, and becomes lost in the grey dawn that obscures his birth. We know the beginnings of little or nothing in this world, physical enquiry zealously pursued may lead to the mythic intricacies of metaphysics, and he who explores the primitive nurseries of our race, as he nears the remote confines of authentic record, perceives in the siren Lachesis' song of past time a confused presence that defies his approach. Of late evolution has assumed the function of an oracle interpreting many traits and obscure qualities in man. Spencer believes that the pleasure from a victory at chess corresponds to the

gratification of ruder triumphs of an earlier time; and the rally of a spirited conversation is the analogue of a mimic battle in which language is substituted for more formidable weapons.

The earliest mental activities were materialized in art; man was prompted to action long before he indulged in meditative thought, was initiated in the rudiments of manual art long before he dreamed of poetry. Reason is an architect of real poetry, and man wondered long before he reasoned. In a tempest primitive man exclaimed: "Who thunders?" long before he enquired "Why does it thunder?" Nay, it may indeed be assumed that art beheld the birth of language itself. Time was when the few desires of our race were communicated in gesture or guttural articulations. True to a natural law, those qualities which are originally inherent in organic constitution never became wholly obliterated. This gesture feature—a remnant of an original and pronounced quality—possesses a character of universal identity or interpretation, and yet lingers with our race; and today a nod is as significant in the Feejee Islands as in London; and the number five as indicated by the extended fingers of one hand is as expressive in the wilds of New Zealand as in New York. As intelligence progresses, philology notes in the increase of words and the addition of syllables the expansion of language. China alone among the civilized nations has never passed the primitive stage of mental development, and possesses a language destitute of an alphabet, whose vocabulary consists of 30,000 monosyllabic roots, and whose verbs are not to be conjugated.

Art is popularly understood to consist merely of an education of the perception of the beautiful. This is but

an incidental result; and while all art should be regarded as an expression of certain mental conceptions, it is clear that it had its origin in that supreme necessity which has ever dominated man. We shall find that to an earnest contemplation of stern necessity all art owes its origin. We shall find that nature settled primitive man in his mundane environment in a state almost as helpless and dependent as now, and that his earliest efforts were directed to his personal protection from the attacks of his own species and the ravages of still more savage animals. And we shall also find that wherever art, as an exponent of truth, has been most sincerely cultivated, there it has longest witnessed the exaltation of intellect and morality, and wherever it has been recognized merely as a vehicle for beauty and sensual delight, there it has attested to the degradation of virtue and the dissemination of ignorance.

Art admits of two general divisions—first, that class which reach the mind through the sense of sight, viz., architecture, sculpture, and painting. The second division consists of another group, which awakens consciousness chiefly through the sense of hearing, dancing, music and poetry. While our purpose is to confine the present consideration chiefly to art as represented in the types of architecture, sculpture and painting, a brief review of the other division may render their consideration not uninteresting.

It may seem paradoxical to state that dancing, music and poetry had their origin in that same supreme sense of necessity, that interpretation of duty and need, that ordered into existence structural and material art. We shall find that, for an indefinite period, they not only formed a natural

and agreeable indulgence, but they also ministered to man's already awakened moral and religious nature.

"A child," observes Jean Paul Richter, "is half animal and half savage," and the impulses of primitive man were unbridled by reason, and that for centuries he was a brute in every respect, but the character by which eventually the ape and tiger qualities of his nature became, not expunged, but subdued within him. Religion owes not its origin to the dread of ghosts, as Spencer assumes, nor wholly to a perception of the infinite inherent in man. Rather does it owe its origin to the beginnings of intelligence; to that sense of wonder excited by the stupendous phenomena of nature, and to those multiplied expressions of power which confounded the lisps of primitive man.

Awed by the wonders set in the heavens—which by day proclaimed to him the infinitude of creative power, and by night whispered of the never-ending abyss of eternity, and the ever-succeeding solitudes of space—and mute in the presence of strange phenomena of sea and land, his life became one continuous emotion of fear and reverence. Impelled by this exalted feeling, which is essentially religion, we observe that early man accordingly celebrated with religious rites his joys and his sorrows, his loves and his victories. If we turn to Egypt, Assyria and Greece, which countries more intelligently than all others have witnessed the successive unfolding and growth of the human mind, we shall find that among their religious rites the dance has been a recognized ceremony. The sculpture of Egypt consists of a record of religious celebrations, military triumphs, and regal pomp, and a confusion of figures derived from

the dance adorn her ancient tombs, columns and pyramids. The Greeks and the Assyrians regarded the dance in a sacred light, as the many typical designs on the Parthenon and the temples of their deities attest to. "Dancing," says Taylor, the anthropologist, "may seem to us moderns a frivolous amusement; but in the infancy of civilization it was full of passionate and solemn meaning. Savages and barbarians dance their joy and sorrow, their love and rage, even their magic and religion. The forest Indians of Brazil, whose sluggish temper few other excitements can stir, rouse themselves at their moonlight gatherings, when, rattle in hand, they stamp in one-two-three times round the great earthen pot of intoxicating kavi liquor; or men and women dance a rude polka step, or the ferocious war dance is performed by armed warriors in paint, marching in ranks hither and thither with a growling chant terrible to hear."

Music consists of the inward feeling of which all art can but manifest the effects. If the creative faculty was wholly wanting in man, the power of imitation alone would be sufficient to account for the position that music occupies among human achievements. No estimate of the indebtedness of man to the phenomena of nature can be made for the variety and utility of his designs. Marking of rhythm by clapping of hands doubtlessly signalized the dawn of the musical faculty, which now being kindled, could never be extinguished. The sighing of the wind through the hollow reeds in Egypt, and its subdued moan through the forest trees, certainly contained a wild melody not wanting in a charm to rude man. Nature has ever soothed her teeming brood with an Aeolian

song; and an universal symphony in low cadence floats upon the evening breeze, or with wild shriek plunges its car through the angry tempest.

The motion of the dance was likely to awaken an emotion, call it music, if you will, and the first orchestra performance consisted in marking rhythm, the first principles of music, by clapping of hands and stamping of feet. This rude performance was but the precursor of the cymbal and drum, and the various string and wind instruments which followed.

"In the childhood of nations," says Richter. "speaking was singing." The earliest articulate language was expressed in a chant-like tone, traces of which are yet discernible in the dialects of certain Indian tribes. Man was capable of dancing before he could sing, and in the exercise of music, poetry naturally succeeded the chant. Prose originated from poetry, as writing had its beginning in sculptural carving. The language of early man doubtlessly partook of the figurative character of the sculptural design: and as the latter brought forth an alphabet and a written tongue, the barrenness of the former soon became lost in an acquired fertility of expression. Poetry may be considered articulate music, but the earliest examples are wanting in the character of rhyme and metre. The plaintive poetic wail of the prophet Job comes down through centuries in plain prose, and the rich allegories of Ossian are wanting in the metrical dress of modern poetry. Poetry may be regarded the hand-maid not only of music, but also of sculpture and painting; it has indeed furnished the designs for many of the triumphs of material art. Sincerity and truth are the inspiring powers of the true poet; Homer care-

fully describes Achilles's shield as it appeared before the eyes of his imagination, and Virgil's faithful description of the destruction by monstrous serpents of the priest Laocoon and his sons, bequeathed to sculpture a legacy of ideal art. When Dante informs us of what he witnessed within the first circle of the "Inferno," we are constrained to believe that the whole scene, with its sapient throng, Aristotle, Socrates and Plato, actually passed before his imagination.

"'Tis the mind that sees;
The outward eyes present the object,
But the mind describes, and hence de-
light,

Disgust, or cold indifference rise,"

It is interesting to reflect upon the vicissitudes of the human mind and and compare its stature at different epochs of its history. We are inclined to ridicule the simple credulity of primitive man when we find him investing with a distinct character and personality the various phenomena of nature. One is amused to learn that early man regarded the thunder and lightning, the wind, the ocean and heavenly luminaries as endowed with a mighty personality,—the mere vesture of some tremendous inherent being and power. Nevertheless in this simple belief reposed the hope and assurance of the highest poetic faculty. The richest types of the poetic mind, illustrated by Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Woodsworth, Byron and Tennyson, distinguish themselves by this faculty to render vocal and articulate, mute, insensate phenomena of nature. Nor does the metaphoric treasure of the modern poet appreciably exceed that of the ancient Greek; nay, deprive nature's poet of today of the influence of Hellenic ideals, and you deny ornate character to his work.

The function of the early poet, and of song. Ah! music, thou whisperest later the bard, has ever been the treasurership of legend and tradition, and exalting deeds of heroism—a ministry indisputable to the nature of man. Music and song have ever been recognized as vital adjuncts of religious ceremonies; and whether practised by the pre-historic Aryan, amid his pastoral surroundings; whether resounding through the sculptural temples of Egypt or Greece, or the towering oaks of the Druid groves, or whether re-echoing through the frescoed dome of St. Peters, or the elaborate colonnades of St. Paul's, the holiest and loftiest emotions of the human breast have ascended in sacred song. However, in Christian countries the dance has been divorced from the list of religious ordinances, and, not unlike the nude in art, it has incurred the condemnation and censure of many, not from any inherent vice, but from the odium acquired through vicious and immoral associations.

Thus does the mind of man everywhere outgrow the habit of its primeval stature; the genius of the hour is but an iconoclast in masquerade destroying the evanescent designs of human ambition and pride. But music being an attribute of higher life, it knows no limit, knows no fear or remorse, and wherever loved and venerated, there it wears its wondrous spell. In mad delirium, when an anarchy of passion had driven reason from its throne, and the maniac would with merciless wrath fain pursue the object of its most sacred affection; while the frenzied mind knew naught of time or place, yet have I heard the dark and solitary cell give forth a melody rich and sweet. The bridled tongue that stammers out an evening prayer is loosened in the sweet melody

of hopes and loves which are not found; around the chained exile thou weavest a symphony of joy that wakens far-off memories and charms away the vacant hours; and childhood's sweet and oft-repeated lay daily renews the sunshine of the young soul's happiness, and repels the shadow of the approaching sorrow-burdened clouds of maturer years!

Having briefly considered that division of art which is relatively fixed and expressed through the medium of sound, we shall now more fully examine the other group, which is measurably fixed art, and which has its expression in form and outline, viz., architecture, sculpture and painting.

The highest art springs from thought and laws which dwell in the human breast. In one instance this law earnestly asserts itself in the writing of an epic poem or a history; in another, the sculpture of a statue; in a third, the impulse expresses itself in a painting, and in a fourth an architectural design marks this silent and involuntary struggle towards creative action. We have the history of the ancients through the Greek historians, but we have also in their contemporary architecture and sculpture an abridged history of the ideas and attainments of their times. Art thus becomes a supplement to history, as an exponent of an age and a nation. And as a proof of the reciprocal affinity which exists between a people and their art, and of the influence of one upon the other, we shall find that those nations which have most truthfully and faithfully applied themselves to the cultivation of art, have handed down to posterity a record of intelligent and heroic action; and the people, who, in their pursuit of art, have from

ignorance evaded truth, or from contempt have scorned nature, have invariably proved themselves unfit counsellors in human affairs, whose intellectual and moral character is dwarfed, and with whom the wheels of progress have been clogged by the lethargy of their own nature.

It may be said that the productions of art which bear not the impress of truth and nature may be classed as ideal; but this is no argument in support of their claim to be expressive of the truest conceptions of the ideal mind. At the confluence of the two streams of art—the real and the ideal—their waters are pure and indistinguishable; the murky water of the fountain disappears in the course of the stream. We shall have occasion to witness the universality of the law which asserts to truth and nature the obedience of art, and shall find that it is only when the extremity of their limitations are reached that either real or ideal art becomes baneful.

Architecture had its origin in two distinct roots, one of which extends down deeply in man's instructive proclivity to provide for his natural wants; and the other taps the fertile elements of his religious nature. Vitruvius informs us that the nests of birds and the lairs of beasts served aboriginal man with the earliest models for his dwellings, and the cave, hut and the tent mark successive advances in primitive architecture. In those localities which abounded in wood and stone, the hut gradually acquired the grandest character of art, and the permanence of all art is typified in the rugged productions of the quarry. No doubt the designs of the carpenter first served as examples for the mason and sculptor, and today the richest architecture and sculpture exhibit unmistakable

traces of the early shaping of wood. The dance and song being regarded as religious ordinances, it is fair to assume that man early provided the scene of their enactment with various designs becoming their importance. Nature's primeval sward gave place to the rude floor; then followed the erection of trees or posts for purpose of decoration, later to serve as supports for enclosure and roof. These were the essentials of architecture, and became the groundwork of future ornamental device. The vertical seams in the bark of the tree posts suggested the graceful fluting of the Ionic columns, and the outer beams surmounting the posts gave the hint for the architrave of the most advanced art.

These were the beginnings of an art which must yet design the great Illiads of architecture—Parthenon of Athens, St. Peter's at Rome and St. Mark's at Venice. For thousands of years the grandest achievements of art were dedicated to religion and its ordinance; and as the chief rites were reserved for the dead, we can readily understand why sepulchral art early became a distinctive feature of architecture. Solitude for the spiritual welfare of aboriginal man found relief mainly in the proper interment of the dead body. To the Hellenic mind only the rite of burial could confer upon the departed spirit a peaceful repose in the abode of the blessed; the ill-fated mortal who from any cause lies unburied, is compelled for the space of a hundred years to wander shivering and wailing through the shades by the river Styx. Virgil gives an account of an experience that befel Aneas in Hades, where he encounters the unhappy spirit of his late hero-pilot Palinurus, who relates that after

his recent shipwreck he drifted ashore upon the coast of Italy, where he was attacked by the barbarous natives and killed. Palinurus, however, informs Aeneas that he is yet unburied, that his corpse lies tossed amid the breakers in the harbor of Vellia, and begs his leader either to send back there and "give him a little earth for charity," or by the exercise of his influence with the infernal powers secure the relaxation of the terrible law which exclude him from the fields of Elysium.

Thus we find that the colossal examples of early Egyptian art were conceived in a religious spirit; indeed, for the beginnings of architecture—its earliest, grand even in their infancy—we must turn to this wonderful people, who were especially a nation of temple and tomb builders. Nor do we at this late day find art withholding its choicest productions from the habitation of the dead. Sepulchral art with the ancients proceeded largely from austere religious motives; today it is the outcome of reverence and affection for the deceased. The large metropolitan necropolises of the world are but confused wildernesses of art, wherein cunning hands have successfully chiselled in granite and marble designs which pierce the tenderest emotions of the heart. The brief epitaph marking the resting place of some childish form may fittingly admonish us of the value of time and the uncertainty of life; and the inscription over the remains of the octogenarian rebuke the selfish pride and ambition of our nature. The highest art, indeed, consists of this power of investing the cold marble with a harmony and silent eloquence that appeals to our sympathy. The distance between the hushed silence of Westminster Abbey and the nearest

Potter's field is an arbitrary space measured by sceptres and tridents; pierce through the robes of royal pomp to the natural heart and you will find they lie side by side. These emotions are everywhere translatable as the unerring language of the human heart; and the family whose opulence enables them to exult in the marble image of a sorrowing parent that bends over the grave of a dear child, possibly little dream that the sculptor obtained his design from the spectacle of an indigent weeping mother in the neighboring Potter's field. Byron has evidently caught this idea in the following sorrowful refrain:

"No sculptured marble marks thy bed
of lowly sleep,
But living statues there are seen to
weep;
Affliction's semblance bends not o'er
thy tomb—
Affliction's self deplores thy youthful
doom!"

The early architecture of Egypt is marked with a rugged endurance which seems to mock the silent aggression of Time. Her sculptured temples of remote antiquity, still majestic amid their reluctant decay, attest to mature attainments in art; and the grim pyramids, bleached with the suns of centuries, bear a strange record of human energy and unknown mechanism. Well might Napoleon within its venerable shadow invoke the valor and heroism of his army by declaring that forty centuries looked down upon them!

Through Assyria and Phoenicia architecture, like sculpture, found its way from Egypt into Greece, where, from successive contributions of Doric, Ionian and Corinthian designs, it early acquired a grace, simplicity and harmony that has never been excelled.

These chaste and classic designs never became corrupted by the weird and unnatural art of India; indeed, the latter has never flourished in the atmosphere of Christian nations. Ruskin somewhere says that the key to a nation's architecture is found in the religion of its people, and nowhere is this precept more fully illustrated than with India. The absence of harmony and natural simplicity in their architecture corresponds to the superstition and the unnaturalness of their religion. The distorted gold and ivory decorations of their temples harmonize with their fantastic religious ceremonies, but bears no relation to the chaste and beautiful designs of the Greek architects. Judged by this criterion, one would believe the religion of the Greeks to have been of a most exalted, intellectual character. The faithful reproduction of natural types which abounds in the construction of their temples and public edifices would suffice to proclaim them seekers after nobleness and truth. The grace and harmony of the Parthenon is at once suggestive of a nobler and purer religion than that which guides the superstitious millions of India. Indeed the paganism of ancient Greece and Rome produced a more healthful type of intellectual and moral life than is today found among most of the idolatrous faiths of Asia.

Art has expressed itself in three great systems of architecture, viz., the Greek, Roman and Gothic. These three types are each distinguished by a certain feature that is at once characteristic of its class. The method of roofing or covering over an open space determined the style of art; the Greek—representing the combined beauty and grace of the Doric, Ionic and Corinthian—is distinguished by the flat

roofing of stone; the Roman by the round arch or dome, and the Gothic by the pointed arch or gable. Upon examination it will be found, as Ruskin has pointed out, that these three periods of architectural design correspond to and were contemporary with as many notable states of human experience. The Greek edifice was designed by that noble Hellenic race, who brought to the highest state of activity the intellectual faculty; and beneath the flat roof of the Parthenon moved to and fro Socrates, Plato and Aristotle—the mightiest intellects of our race. For hundreds of years following the productions of the Greek mind were destined to nourish and sustain the feeble intellects of mankind; and it was in the deepening shades of this intellectual twilight that the round arch of Roman architecture appears. Beneath this arch, like a vast dome shutting out the harmony and glory of nature, we behold social and moral man degenerate, and almost relapse into his former barbarity.

During the thirteenth century, the Gothic arch appeared, it is said, almost simultaneously in every country in Europe, bringing with it the promise of the richest designs, and pointing the way to the long halted train of human energies.

We shall now more fully consider the arts of sculpture and painting, and it will be seen that they did not have their origin in the luxurious manner in which they are at present employed, but were the outgrowth of necessity, and became early applied to a serious and earnest purpose. The art of writing was originally drawing, and the earliest form of written language consisted of a series of rude imitative designs. The earliest examples of writing consisted of drawings, probably

illustrating religious or triumphal festivals; and this rude art having passed through successive symbolic stages, gradually acquired an intelligible character. The Egyptians early brought this imitative drawing to a highly serviceable state, and in these hieroglyphic tracings doubtlessly recorded the triumphs of battles and the pageantry of their kings. A glimpse of this primitive picture writing may still be discerned in the alphabets of certain languages; Aleph, the first character of the Hebrew alphabet, signifies an ox, and the sign for that letter is the outline of an ox's head. The Phoenicians derived the rudiments of their alphabet from the Egyptian hieroglyphics, which they later brought to such a serviceable state that at the present day, with few exceptions, the alphabets of all civilized nations are of Phoenician origin.

With the origin of sculpture came the exaltation of religious worship. We have already observed that man's religious awakenings found expression in the dance, music and song, but the time must arrive when the vague objects of his devotion must be exchanged for some material and tangible form. The subjugation of his savage nature, by the gradually unfolding attributes of affection and sympathy, marked the erection of the first intellectual watch tower of man, and with the dawn of love came the possibility of devotion. But what was he to worship? The sun daily rolled his lambent car over the azure arch of infinitude; the tempest-nursed thunder and lightning with roar awakened the solitary mountain echoes, and with flash kindled the sable scrolls of heaven; an awful voice issued from the coral cavern of the mighty deep—these wondrous phenomena evoked in man a

deep emotion and inspired him with the truest devotional spirit of all time, viz., that of humble and reverend silence. For man's earliest religion, like his earliest art, was vague and rudimentary, and the feeling existed long before he was able faithfully to express it. His faculties expanded in proportion to his physical and religious needs, and when the symbols of infinite power no longer fully served his religious nature then the slumbering powers of invention enlisted in his service. Sculpture's first duty consisted in designing types or symbols of pre-existing forces or phenomena. Sun-worship, after hundreds of years, gradually merged into fire-worship; and images of wood and stone, typifying certain forces in the reign of natural law, succeeded the worship of the real phenomena. The idea of a devil seems unknown to all primitive religions, doubtlessly from the belief that good and evil alike are the work of the deities. With Homer, Zeus dispenses both:

"Two urns by Jove's high throne have stood,
The source of evil one, the other good;
From thence the cup of mortal man he fills,
Blessings to these, to those distributes ill,
To most he mingles both."

It is among the Aryans that we first find mention of a devil, and strangely enough, the term devil or demon appears to be derived from the Aryan deva or delty. Edward Clodd, in the following, gives a brief account of the evolution of a demon: "Early in the history of the Aryan tribes there had arisen a quarrel between the Brahminic and Iranian divisions. The latter had become a quiet-loving, agricultural people, while the former

remained marauding nomads, attacking and harassing their neighbors. In their plundering inroads they invoked the aid of spells and sacrifices, offering the sacred soma-juice to their gods, and nerving themselves for the fray by deep draughts of the intoxicating stuff. Not only they, but their gods as well, thereby became objects of hatred to the peaceful Iranians, who foreswore worship of the freebooters' deities, and transformed these devas of the old religion into demons."

Originating with the primitive Aryans, idol worship has through scores of centuries flourished in the service of successive families of mankind. When we revert to Egypt, where all art in a modern sense had its origin, and remember that the principles of many of our sciences and industries were conceived and developed by men truly noble and brave, who offered prayer and thanks to sculptured deities, these hewn gods and goddesses seem to glow with a real divinity, which irradiates her ancient glory and illumines the intellectual march in the morning of its progress.

Imaginative art, like poetry, essays the representation of an idea wholly as it appears to the mind; no art can fully grasp the plastic designs of fancy—"it cannot create what's loftier than its dream." No painter or poet ever undertook the execution of a work until he had become familiar with it, until it had passed in review before his imagination. The careful narrative of scenes and incidents in Milton's "Paradise Lost" attests to the poet's imagination having actually beheld the terrible things which he describes, and the lamentations of the "Purgatorio" seem to have risen in hopeless wail upon the mind of Dante. In like manner Phydias, when carving

the statue of "Athenae" or Jupiter, had before his mind an ideal of bodily beauty and perfection, for the imitation of which his best efforts and skill are directed. Imaginative art has derived its ideas chiefly from scriptural and historic sources, and the productions of Greek sculpture consisted largely of deities for their temples, and from that period down to the sixteenth century the greatest achievements of chisel and brush were dedicated to religious purposes.

No people ever surrendered themselves with more ardor to polytheism than the Greeks, and no people ever attained in intellect or civilization a higher standard of perfection. In no nation were the laws of art more clearly or forcibly illustrated. The Greek art was ideal, and their politics, philosophy and religion were indeed a reflection and worship of their art. Types of the ideal abound in every field of their art; Homer's poetry, Phidias's architecture and sculpture, Socrates' and Plato's philosophy, and Pericle's statesmanship fully attest to the ideal nature of the Greek mind. They derived their deities from the poetical traditions of their people, and the influence of their worship permeated every avenue of life. From the most exalted function of state down to the retirement of the domestic hearth was believed to be under the controlling influence of its enthroned deity. Prior to and succeeding any momentous engagement it was a moral duty incumbent upon the chief participants to offer sacrifice with libations to the gods, to which rites were frequently added a protracted entertainment of music, dancing and tragedy. As a rule the Greeks assigned each deity a separate temple, which of

itself became indeed an allegory of ideal art, in this respect differing from the Indo-Germanic tribes, who enthroned their gods in the open air. It seems strange to reflect that the religious system of a people, whose example in literature, politics and philosophy shall commend itself to remotest posterity, should have experienced such utter effacement and death. Strange that those sculptured deities, which every Greek approached with the sincerest veneration, should emerge from an evolution of a score of centuries mere minature Venuses, Neptunes and Jupiters—ornaments for the drawing room and study.

Man ever regards with careless interest those ancient rites which solaced the religious instincts of his ancestors. One cannot recall the rugged grandeur of the old Norse mythology, without a secret regret that the idea of those monster caldron-bearing, cavern-rending deities has forever passed from the world. As Carlyle observes, there is something pathetic in this last voice of paganism. The thunder god Thor no longer grasps his hammer "till the knuckles grow white," and striding abroad rends Scandanavian cliff and mountain; times has undone his apotheosis and reduced him to the precincts of the nursery—plain Jack-the-giant-killer!

And what of Christianity today? The simplicity of the truths as taught by Jesus himself are such as were easily comprehended by the humblest fisherman in Palestine; but ecclesiastical contrivance and ritual invention have since so multiplied that the observation of the simple and essential virtues, originally inculcated, seem now in the gorgeous pageantry of ecclesiasticism, to be actually declining in importance. Do you not every-

where observe the fruitless attempt at reducing to the precise terms and measure of a science, that which is really only a distinguished example and a life, unparalleled and grand though it be? You hear much about reconciling religion with science, two things which should never have been compared, as though belief and knowledge were synonymous. Mere knowledge can no more satisfy the religious nature of man than mere belief can direct some department of physical science.

The schism of the reformation loosened the key-stone in the arch of the magnificent organization of dogmatic Christianity, establishing therein a vulnerable point in permitting the individual right of arbitrary interpretation of the Scriptures, which, with its later consequences of higher criticism and divers contentions, seems to threaten with decay ecclesiasticism itself. The nineteenth century seems likely to witness a greater revolution in the history of Christianity than was known to the period of the reformation. Morality and dogmatic theology are likely soon to part company; but not however until the ethical endowment of the latter shall have become wholly the possession of the former.

Modern Christianity boasts that its teachings alone inculcate the love of one's neighbor as himself, and such was the example of its beneficent founder. But what is the testimony of Christian nations? We are wont to regard England as foremost in the van of civilized and philanthropic progress, and if you visit London and attend religious service in St. Paul's cathedral you will hear state episcopacy exhorting the exercise of those precepts which have ever ennobled and rendered delightful the conduct of our

race. If afterwards you visit the national arsenal at Woolwich, and observe its warlike activities, you will conclude that the fruits of its terrible industry bids not fair to hasten the time when the swords of all nations shall be beaten into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Does that great nation really love her enemies, and seek to do good to them who hate her? Who records of her this example: "Resist not evil; if any one smites thee on the right cheek turn to him the other also?" Has not her practice been rather the creed of Islam: "Avenge every insult, wash out every offense with blood, your honor and profit demand it. Require ten fold compensation for every insult; if it be not granted send warships to shatter and destroy."

But some one observes: English arms have only been used to make way for the agencies of civilization, to relieve the distressed, and have rescued millions of dusky mortals from the bondage of ignorance and paganism. Ah! my friend, in this noble Christian dream of philanthropic effort there ascends beyond the spectacle of your wretched heathen the alluring vision of Indian rupees and silks and rice and African diamond fields and ivory, and the precious blood of the poor pagan himself must be shed if he refuse yielding up as spoils to his Christian adversary the wealth of nature's endowment. If water chokes what will you drink after it? Oh! Britannia, like some royal princess thou art fragrant with the incense of the tropics, remote isles and distant lands like emeralds enwreath thy fair brow, cashmeres and tapestries from thy sorrowful Indian groves enfold thy shapely form, suffer not thou the fate of the Tarperian maid, who from the burden of her

jewels was precipitated down the cliff and perished.

There have been three schools of perfect art—perfect in that they each conformed as far as possible to truth and nature—which are known as the Athenian, Florentine and Venetian. In support of this assertion it only need be observed that the productions of these three schools attained in their respective spheres a degree of artistic excellence that has never been surpassed. The distinguishing feature of these three schools respectively are: Athenian art possessed the characteristic of physical perfection and outline; the Florentine endowed their art with the quality of mental expansion, while the Venetians brought to the highest possible state the harmonious employment of colors. The few surviving specimens of Athenian art still remain models of form and sensuous beauty, the expression and emotion of the characters portrayed upon the ceiling of the Sistine chapel at Rome, in Michael Angelos' "Last Judgment," have grown dim amid the rising incense of four turbulent centuries which have brought forth no rival; while the glowing scene of Tintoretto's "Paradise," which Ruskin declares to be the thoughtfulest and the mightiest picture in the world, with its reckless distribution of colors, together with the celestial allegory, constitutes a marvellous achievement that seems to have exhausted the very resources of art. To their schools are we chiefly indebted for the richest productions of ideal art.

It was Florentine and Venetian art which brought forth the great masterpieces of fresco and mural decoration, that appear in the churches throughout Italy and Venice, which even in their present state of mouldering de-

cay command the admiration of posterity and attest to their authors having reached the highest altitudes of human conception and effort.

We have already noticed that art had its origin in the religious service of primitive man, and curiously enough we shall perceive that down through successive stages of his social and intellectual progress a chaste and sincere art has also continued a recognized agent in his religious rites, and doubtlessly in some form shall so continue. For hundreds of years prior to the thirteenth century Byzantine art (by which alone the art of painting was throughout the middle ages preserved in Europe) was maintained through the encouragement it received from successive popes and wealthy ecclesiastics. It was natural to suppose that its greatest efforts would thus be directed to the decoration of places of public worship with fitting subjects from sacred history. During this period the Christian church permitted and encouraged a class of subjects embraced in scriptural teaching, especially those representing Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saintly apostles, together with various circumstances of their lives. However, the early Christians soon distorted Greek art by imposing upon it the austere conventionalities of their church. In the fifteenth century, with the advent of Michael Angelo and Raphael, painting attained its highest degree of excellence, and from which period the spirit and efficiency of the art has gradually declined. The progress of Byzantine art now became lost in the life-like expression and chaste noble productions of their successors, and painting of Jesus Christ, the Madonna and other sacred personages arose from the brushes of

Raphael, Angelo and Titian, suffused with the very emotion of thought and life. If the art of mere form had previously been recognized as a serviceable ally in religious instruction, certainly now, when its productions became additionally endowed with a life-like expression of thought and emotion, the church would recognize its influence and power none the less. For centuries the church had successfully utilized the productions of art as auxiliaries in its devotional exercises, and with evident good reasons. By far the greater number of its members were steeped in utter ignorance, and unable to read; indeed, had they been otherwise, their condition so far as a knowledge of the Bible was concerned would have been but little different, for the few copies of the scriptures then in existence, together with the high price set upon them, rendered their general perusal impossible. Under these circumstances the sense of sight became utilized as a certain and permanent avenue to the understanding and memory, whereby the church might inculcate the cardinal doctrines of its faith. There exists among Protestants a popular belief that the Roman Catholic church commands an exclusive monopoly of ecclesiastical art. It must be remembered that the Greek branch of the Christian church, probably at an earlier period than her Roman sister, recognized the advantage accruing from painted and sculptured representations of a sacred character. The early Greek church contained an unmistakable alloy of the Hellenic philosophy, which exercised a distinct influence upon its ecclesiastic art, as attested to by the facts that its productions tended to inspire thought and reflection, in this respect differing from the Roman images, which more frequently aimed

at arousing the passions and feelings. the ignorant." The early reformers The Greek church has ever shown a preference for Byzantine art, and today expressionless draped figures, executed in a rude archaic style, are characteristic of its ecclesiastical embellishment.

Reformed Protestantism has found much to censure respecting the position which art occupies in the Roman Catholic church. Whatever in this age may be one's opinion regarding the wisdom of a continuance of this ancient system of devotional art, for centuries it doubtlessly afforded a powerful influence in preserving and sustaining, through a great crisis in our race, the essentials of a faith that shall long continue to ennoble man and exalt his mind. During the first thirteen centuries of our era the intellect of Europe was intensely lethargic and unreceptive, and often imagination could alone be aroused by an appeal addressed to the senses.

Images symbolic of the crucifixion, etc., were effectual in arousing the most torpid mind, and frequently despite the authority of the church, the ignorant masses became blind to the merely symbolic character and offered worship to the image itself. Iconoclasm within the Roman Catholic church has not been unknown, and as early as the sixth century in protest of this we find Pope Gregory the Great declaring that "it is one thing to worship a picture and another to learn from the language of a picture what that is which ought to be worshipped. What those who can read learn by means of writing, that do the uneducated learn by looking at a picture. That therefore ought not to have been destroyed which had been placed in churches, not for worship, but solely for instructing the minds of

Notwithstanding that Protestantism has become aggressive in its attacks upon the painted Madonnas and saints of her ancient neighbors, it is undeniable that Protestant episcopacy also recognizes certain material accessories, measurably inseparable from its rites and ceremonies. What of the blaze of saintly images in the windows of its churches, the fixed attitudes of its priests, clad in rich vestments of order; the uniform position of the altar, perchance surmounted by lighted tapers? These are but remnants of the grand reflection of that iridescent orb which through the long night of the middle ages were permitted to kindle the passions of man, that they might enlighten his understanding.

As already observed, with the advent of the Florentine school of painting came the possibility of reproducing true types of the ideal or vital beauty. To faithfully represent the human expression art must ever summon the supremest faculties of the mind, and one cannot study the various types of natural expression, e. g. those delineated in Raphael's "Transfiguration," without feeling that the great "Illiads" of the human mind can as faithfully be depicted by the brush as the pen. This was only to be accomplished by return to the diligent study of nature, the faithful imitation of which had already won for Greek art a name that stands today without a rival. The prevailing character of the pre-Raphael art was essentially physical, as determined by outline and contour of

body, but when the productions of the Florentine school stood forth, not merely perfect in outline, but with an expression flushed with the subtle reflections of intellect and morality, we might well imagine its noble founders to believe they had pierced the veil of finite vision, and there beheld the Arcana shuttles of Isis weaving the visible garments of God. Nothing but the purest heart could translate the impulses of the mind, nothing but the most earnest mind could understand the tender yearnings of love, nothing but sympathy could fathom the well-spring of affliction and grief. Pride, sensuality and cruelty, or whatever is expressive of evil, now became banished from productions of ideal beauty, and a Madonna painting that achieved this and successfully expressed a glowing emotion and tenderness became the recognized standard of the new school. If we undertake an analysis of the intelligent and moral expression, we shall perceive that the presence of either of these signs of evil will degrade the human face and tarnish the radiance of those perceptions which struggle outward, and alone illumine the human countenance. Pride and vanity, with their vicious spawn, have been the source of all national downfall; such history as you may—Jewish, Spartan, Greek, Roman, and Venetian—this sad truth confronts you. They may become even more odious than sensuality itself, since the latter has its root in the human passions, and becomes vicious only when it exceeds the temperate needs of the body. But pride and vanity are ever hostile to the impulses of good and noble deeds, and from their foolish self-exaltation with disdain continually look down upon the world beneath them, not daring to raise their eyes

lest they should above behold something beyond the measure of their own fancied greatness. A chastened pride may so operate that it will grace and adorn the dictates of wisdom and love, but only so when it obediently serves in rebuking the errors and purifying the purposes of the will.

Pride that affects superior intellectual endowment becomes at once a protest against all liberal culture of the mind, and the wisdom of the world no longer confounds the sun-like brilliancy of original profound thought with the fitful pocket-like flash of self-annoyance and presumption. Great men are humble, do great things unconsciously, cannot tell how or why they do them, are guided by no law or rule—their work becomes the elucidation of law itself. Aristotle, Plato and Bacon can't inform you how they achieved their original work, but the borrowed light of the shallow pedant becomes at once revealed in the vanity that illumines his mind.

Civilization owes to beneficence and sympathy its many endowments for relief of human suffering and distress. True beneficence, unless blindfold, is unable amid the gaze of hungry multitudes to sit down to luxurious boards, and sympathy knows not the reproach of selfishly turning aside from the scenes of sorrow and distress by the way, but where calamity or disaster open the flood gates of affliction and grief, there with flowing bowl and gentle hand it may be found bringing cheer and comfort. Along the path of art there tower no monuments to the memory of the Attilas and Jeffreys, those bloodhounds of our race, who brought naught but suffering and oppression upon mankind; but the perspective of history is strewn with lofty

columns attesting to posterity's veneration for the memory of those philanthropic deeds that struck off the shackles of oppression, and bade happiness and justice dwell in the habitations of suffering and wrong.

Sensuality is the bloated priestess of bodily pleasure, who proffering Circe's cup of enchantment, sinks in a degradation of swinish surroundings the honor and nobility of man. Like the hearth-fire of the Vestal virgins of old, chastened passion should pacify the energies of the mind, and shed around its mortal temple the ennobling warmth of continent affection and trust.

The indelible Cain-like brand of ferocity and cruelty dispels the beauty of the comeliest face that it settles upon; still the fiendish nature of the Pharoos, the Neros, and the Ivans the Terrible, yet lurk in masses of our race. The primitive savage who seeks your scalp for its own value is conscious of no base motive, but on the contrary is guided by the noblest impulse of his nature, whereas the civilized savage who today seeks your scalp only for the contents of your purse has yet experienced no ethical life, and for the reason that the mills of civilization, though operating for centuries, have been unable to grind out the hereditary brutality of his nature. The distress of indigence, the innocence of youth, the infirmity of age, alike appeal to it in vain; it seeks naught but a carnival of agony—insatiated by reptition, unwearied by rapine.

Thus far our enquiry has been directed chiefly to the relations of art to intellect and their reciprocal influences upon each other. We have seen that art has been the materialized expression of earnest thought; that its noblest productions have successively

handed down to man an unerring tale of past time, that may be read by all who diligently enquire. We have seen that these productions virtually become strange object lessons marking the unconscious and irrepressible struggle of the human mind towards expression, and whose alligorical language conveys to posterity precepts of the deepest meaning.

The relation of art to intellect having been established, we shall endeavor to ascertain what concern it has with morality. Art dwells in the higher planes of man's intellect, and is conscious of no moral impulse; the passions never painted Chevanne's "Bathers," or Tintoretto's "Marriage of Ariadne and Bacchus." But certain it is that within recent times art has been dragged down to the sensual embrace of immorality and became the slave of an inflated voluptuousness. In the many dreams of imagination man has found no theme nobler than man, and earnestly regarded his natural picture never fails to excite admiration and wonder. This true art invariably achieves, and it is only when it becomes the minion of passion that its fair creations become flushed with seductive charms of sensuality and lust. Greek art consisted chiefly in the production of mythological deities, which for obvious reasons were executed in the nude state. To the refined Helot the idea of a draped figure of Venus would have aroused a perfect revolt of the feelings—neither mantle or robe shall encumber Aprodites' silver throne on the deep. Whether or not it was owing to their art having originated in the sculpture of mythological deities, it is clear that the Greeks represented their philosophers, statesmen and generals in a naked condition. Chisel-

ing marble, says Reynolds, has ever been a most serious business, and the attempt at transmitting to posterity the style of a contemporary dress is purchased often at a ruinous price—the value, indeed, of everything that is desirable in art. Greek sculptors therefore bade their creations in nakedness leap forth from the solid rock, which early acquired a superior excellence, and to this day remain models unsurpassed for technical skill and perfection. Thus the Greeks, whether amid the sacred stillness of their temple, or in the fragrant atmosphere of the groves were constantly surrounded with beautiful nude statuary reflecting the nobleness of its designers, the grandeur and simplicity of which ennobled their higher nature and rebuked those passions which in our own day have with the scarlet and fine linen of lust invested the richest triumphs of art.

As De Quincy observes: The characteristic aim of painting is reality and life; of sculpture, ideality and duration; the former is sensuous and concrete, the latter abstract and imaginative. Thus we perceive the imperative need of taste in the selection alone of designs, and their adaptation to the realms of painting and sculpture respectively, and of the possible agreeable or ridiculous effect of the draped or undraped figure. In nude sculpture this agreeable effect is well illustrated in the group of the *Vigilant* "Laocoon," or in Canova's "Theseus and the Centaur," and its utter ridiculousness was never more exemplified than in the sculptural burlesque, which a century ago was seriously undertaken and faithfully executed in the statue of Voltaire—an image representing with ghastly fidelity the

meagre and attenuated anatomy of its original.

Technical skill and a thorough knowledge of the human frame have exalted to the highest degree many modern productions of art, but these same factors have, through the infection of a sensual realism, also brought upon some of its fairest creations an imputed immorality. "Nature cares nothing for chastity," says M. Renan, and he might have truthfully added that a large number of his countrymen are similarly disaffected. Nature, like pure womanhood handling her babe of an hour, indeed, cares nothing for chastity, but the fig-leaves of man's moral consciousness have long rustled over the grave of his moral innocence.

The immorality of France has infected not less extensively modern art than it has modern literature. The pure waters of art and literature as they flow down from their ancient fountains through this brilliant but deplorably abandoned nation, become foul and putrid from the festering scaffold and guillotine. We only realize the significance of this truth when we remember that independent of painting, of all existing schools of sculpture, by far the most important are the French. Here we find an art which hitherto had served to apotheosize the image of man now degrading its wonderful creations, reflecting only the soft sensuous characters of the heroes and heroines of popular romance. These productions are the natural progeny of the passions and pleasures of modern France—inspirations of the vicious realism of her literature—dreams of George Sand and Emile Zola. Half a century ago France could exult in the possession of the literary models of Western Europe, but during the last fifty years the char-

acter of the mass of its fiction has been such as to command for it only a surreptitious perusal. No modern authority has so exclusively monopolized the art of exhibiting vice for its own sake as Emile Zola. Among English authors who nearest approach this method of Zola's we find Smollet and Fielding of the last century, who occasionally manifest a reckless concern in portraying the lewd qualities of their characters. Rarely, however, does this occur from mere wantonness in these authors, but rather does it proceed from a desire that an instance of immorality may serve as a test of the endurance of virtue. But the disciples of M. Zola's school depend upon ethical grounds, his continual exhibition of the filthy and beastly side of human nature, and declare that what he exhibits, while revolting, is truth, and that the responsibility for this deplorable state rests, not upon the teachings of realism, but upon natural man himself.

True, M. Zola frequently shows a masterly hand in portraying idyllic scenes, which enhance the seductiveness of his art, and is not wanting in a sense of poetic beauty and humor, which, however, he seems disinclined to employ. An illustration of delightful idyllic beauty occurs in "The Fate of Rugon," where the young lovers, Meitte and Silvere, have their first meeting. A wall separated the gardens of the homes where the girl and boy lived, which extended across the well which served both families. "The still waters," continues M. Zola, "reflected the two openings of the well, two half moons which the shadow of the wall above divided with a dark line. If you leaned over you seemed to see, in the vague light, two wonderfully clear, brilliant mirrors.

On sunny mornings, when the ropes did not drip and trouble the surface, these two moons shone distinct in the green water, and reflected with wonderful minuteness the ivy leaves that hung above the well. Very early one morning, when Silvere was drawing water for the house, he chanced to stoop over at the moment when he was pulling the rope. A thrill ran through him, he remained motionless, bending over the water. At the bottom of the well he thought he saw a girl's smiling face looking up at him, but he had shaken the rope, and the troubled water was now a dim mirror that reflected nothing clearly. He waited till the well grew still again, he did not dare move; his heart was beating hard. As the wrinkles on the water widened and died away he saw the figure begin to grow again. Long it wavered in the dancing pool, which gave a vague, shadowy beauty to the apparition. At last it grew steady and clear. There was Meitte's smiling face, her bright kerchief, her white bodice, with its blue bands. Then Silvere saw his own shadow in the other mirror. The two shadows nodded at each other, at first they never thought of speaking." The beauty and simplicity of this scene in unsurpassed, and one would have fain hoped that fortune had in store for the fairy-like Meitte a gentler fate than the bullet of insurrection that the author abandons her to. Here for a moment M. Zola appears at his best, but such instances are rare; rather does he prefer to dwell upon some scene of brutal debauchery, for example the seduction and cruelty inflicted upon the poor lame girl Gervaise Maquart, or gloat over the amours of the garret, or the knowledge of secret and nameless iniquities. Beyond doubt he accurately

represents what is filthy and detestable in human nature, but he represents it out of all just proportion and reason, and seldom endows his characters with a quality that does not accentuate some depraved and abominable habit. The contention that the vicious side of life should, in fiction, be suppressed is puerile and foolish, but its management demands the selection of average types of human character, and the prudent direction of immoral narrative, to the end of arousing the sympathy of virtue and rebuking the excesses of passion. M. Zola's genius has an affinity for the antithesis of purity and nobleness, the semblance of these attributes he may use only to disguise the seductive creations of his imagination. So pronounced in this morbid faculty in this author that were he to accompany you as guide to Versailles, instead of showing you the elaborate architecture and the beautiful fountains of the city, he would instinctively introduce you to the scullery of the palace, and lead you through the wretched slums of ignorance and filth. Were he to escort you through Venice, instead of pointing out the matchless grandeur of the church of St. Mark or the magnificent Ducal palace with its treasury of art, he would lead over the bridge of sighs into the state prison of the old Doges down into its dungeons, oppressive with the accumulated mould and slime of centuries, and there in an ecstasy of delight point to the heavy chains that often in cruel embrace had bound merely the natural man, long after reason had taken its flight, or describe in detail the horrible banquets of human suffering, which generations ago had there been invoked in the name of Venetian tyranny.

Thus we find since the close of the sixteenth century that art has suffered a degradation of those acquired endowments which originally gave promise of lasting nobility and grandeur. Prior to this time it owed its productions chiefly to the inspiration of religion and patriotism, and patiently and earnestly labored that they might represent nature and truth. Since that time it has become more and more the slave of a classic sensuality, and imaginative art seems no longer inclined to conform to standards of nature and truth, but recognizing certain social signs of the age, fashions its productions to the nod of popular opinion and preconceived ideas of what is right. It has ever been its function to reproduce the physical beauty of man, and with depth of color and radiance of emotion and sympathy, kindle it with the expression of life. The popular mind, which slakes its feverish thirst in the sensual fountain of M. Zola's realism, cares little for the mysterious fires that slumber in the eye, the strange lines which encircle the lips, or the shadowy modulations of the brow; a regular face, with a brawny arm and a swelling calf constitutes its ideal of manhood, while the measure of vital beauty as represented in the frail dowagers and prima-donnas of today consists of a dimpled face, an uncovered bosom, a finely moulded ankle and a dainty foot. Nor are these un-seraphic productions of art found alone in the galleries and the drawing-rooms of the world. A vapid semblance of the once honored art of painting has become solely the possession of commerce, and the merchandise of nations is literally branded with gaudy images of expressionless lusty viragos,

and dull, meaningless Cupids and Venuses. Passion has corrupted the sacred function of art, and with the heated wine of illicit desire administers the sensual pleasure of man.

But true art can never die. While the emerald waste of ocean murmurs sinks in the magic spell of slumber, or shrieks and battles with the tempest's fury ; while cloud-crowned mountains tower in rugged might, or russet plains and dreamy vales unfold their vernal vesture ; while aurora glids the gates of morning with her scrolls of burnished gold, or night's deepening crimson curtains gather o'er yon western hills ; while the expression

of sympathy and love dwell upon the human face, or nobility rests upon his form ; though, perchance, the tide of civilization should recede within the obscure caverns of its birth, and remote ages should behold the lapse of the human intellect into its primitive state of credulity and awe, and should witness reason in terror shrink from the marvellous phenomena of nature, and renounce its pursuits in philosophy and science, art shall flourish in the faithful interpretation of the human mind, whether it be in the rude design of the untutored savage, or in emulating the inspired creations of Tintoret or Raphael !

